



# ECO-AWARENESS NEWSLETTER

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## Wind Turbines - to breeze or not to breeze, that is the question!

Where do you stand on the wind turbine debate: unsightly and a blot on the landscape or, what's all the fuss about?

Wind is the movement of air from an area of high pressure to one of low and this is because the sun heats the surface of the earth unevenly. As hot air rises, cooler air moves in to the void. If the sun shines, the wind will blow and that wind can be used to "power" our lives.



Utilising wind for power is not new: sail boats harnessed the wind on their sails, allowing the world to be explored; farmers used windmills to pump water and grind corn.

A wind turbine is a device which converts kinetic energy from wind into electrical power. The first electricity generating wind turbine was a battery charging machine installed as far back as 1887 by the Scottish academic,

James Blyth, to light his holiday home, here in our back yard in Marykirk, by Montrose.

Wind is a renewable and clean energy source. Once the turbine is erected it is cheap to run as wind is free. Surely it's a no brainer. Why don't we have more both on and off shore?

Some people think wind turbines are unsightly and noisy. Are they ugly? Personally I don't find them so and even if they are, surely it is a price worth paying if we want to "power our lives" in the future, without damaging the environment further. If you were sceptical about climate change before, surely the recent wettest February weather recorded in the U.K. and resultant flooding has convinced any remaining doubters of its reality. We need to move away from fossil fuels which contribute to climate change, but also because they will run out anyway.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Time we learnt to love turbines for what they do and how they do it, rather than how they look. If we want future generations to have a future... we must.

By **Fay Forge**

### MORE TURBINES ON THE HORIZON!

Consent has been granted for adjacent projects by Moray Offshore Renewables LTD. (MORL) and Beatrice Offshore Windfarm LTD. (BOWL) for a total of 326 wind turbines.

The developments in the Moray Firth, off Caithness, will be capable of generating up to 1,866mw of electricity. Their impact on birds and the environment will be monitored, Scottish energy minister Fergus Ewing said. From [The Courier](#)



Eco-congregation Scotland is an ecumenical charity helping church congregations link environmental

issues to their Christian faith and encouraging them to take practical action in their church and community.

We provide:

Support and advice on environmental issues. Local networks of churches. An awards scheme. An annual meeting of eco-congregations. An environmental audit for churches. Written materials for study, worship and practical action. A web site. Regular newsletters. Links with other organisations.

Taken from an [Eco-Congregation](#)

### Earth Hour Event

Our eco group held a recorded music event at our church hall on Saturday 29th March as our contribution to WWF's Earth Hour when the lights were switched off for an hour between 8:30pm and 9:30pm.

A wide range of appropriate music was played by DJ Alex Robertson, for the evening, and Alex also talked a little about the event and how it has spread around the world.

Refreshments were enjoyed halfway through the evening.

## CALLING ALL MUSHROOM LOVERS!

Mushrooms - I love them so when I stumbled across a "grow your own" kit from the Espresso Mushroom Company I thought I would give it a try.

We are a nation of coffee drinkers with over 70 million cups of coffee drunk every day in the UK so instead of discarding the grounds, they are recycled and used to grow



mushrooms. Coffee grounds are collected from cafes around Brighton on a specially adapted bike diverting them from landfill. During their growth, mushrooms break down the coffee waste and averts greenhouse gas emissions that occurs when untreated coffee grounds biodegrade. They are nature's recyclers! Each Kitchen Garden contains coffee from 100 espressos and after they've finished growing, you are left with some lovely mushroom-enriched soil enhancer compost.

So how did it go? Well, I only actually got to eat two in the end! The first cycle died, the second produced two very large ones that died overnight (I was planning on having them for breakfast) and the third cycle produced the ones in the next column but they were well worth the long wait.



They do grow remarkably quickly so much so I had to rearrange my windowsill around them and they are a beautiful colour.



There are only supposed to be two or three cycles but mine seems keen to try for a fourth so who knows, maybe I will have more mushrooms this time round!

I would really recommend giving this a go. It is ideal for all ages, a fun way to recycle and very easy; all you need to do is spray them twice a day, watch and wait. I should also point out that I do not like coffee, in fact I hate it, so if you are the same as me, do not worry, the mushrooms do not taste of coffee!

They are available from - [espressomushroom.co.uk](http://espressomushroom.co.uk) and [www.ethicalsuperstore.com](http://www.ethicalsuperstore.com)

By **Vicky Fraser**

## BEACH CLEAN

**THE OLD AND ABBEY CHURCH** are organising a beach clean on **Sunday 18 May 2014 @ 1.30pm**

Please meet at End of Sea Wall, at the beach opposite McDonalds, West Links, Arbroath

Volunteers welcome, although children must be accompanied by an adult.

Refreshments will be provided.

**Bring Gloves.**



Alex, Jean and Vicky at Inchture church yard. They were attending the church wildlife workshop mentioned in our last issue. The pic was taken by Margaret Tulleth, the fourth member of our eco group attending.

## What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity means the 'variety of life'. We depend on it for equality of our lives— from our clean water and air, to our food, clothing and medicines. There is much to be proud of within the 7,500 square km that makes up Tayside. Visitors from all over the world come to enjoy what we take for granted on our doorstep from our big trees and stunning upland scenery, to our coast and beaches.

### What can I do?

Help bats by installing bat boxes, bat bricks or shuttering in the eaves. Ask SNH, or your local Bat Group, for advice. If you make your own bat box do not use treated timber.

By not over-tidying the garden, you can provide a source of natural materials such as moss or twigs for birds. House martins and swallows need mud to build their nests. Encourage them to nest by using rough-surfaced soffit facing boards which allow wet mud to stick successfully.

Many birds are losing nest sites: provide a variety of nest boxes for birds such as Blue Tits, Robins, Swallows, Swifts or Sparrows. Hibernation boxes can also be provided for Hedgehogs, Amphibians or insects such as Bumble Bees.

Many garden centres sell a range of boxes, or you can make your own. The British Trust for Ornithology Nest Box Guide gives step-by-step instructions for 2 types of nest box – [www.bto.org](http://www.bto.org).

If re-roofing, replace a few old lichen-covered tiles evenly among the new tiles to allow the original lichens to colonise them.

From **Householders' guide to Biodiversity, Tayside Biodiversity Partnership.**